

1794

A FEW
STATE CRIMINALS
BROUGHT TO THE BAR
OF
PUBLIC JUSTICE;
WITH
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE LAST, AND ADVICE TO
THE NEW PARLIAMENT,
Calling themselves
REPRESENTATIVE
OF
THE PEOPLE.

MACB. What are these?
BANQ. The earth hath bubbles as the water hath,
And these are of them.

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JANUARY 1, 1901

REPORT

OF THE

THE BOARD

STATE CRIMINALS

BROUGHT TO THE BAR

PUBLIC JUSTICE.

THE dissolution of a parliament similar to our last, would be considered as the greatest national blessing this country has for centuries experienced; did we not, from fatal experience, know, that the removal of one set of men, advisers of a line of conduct disgraceful to themselves, and ruinous to the nation, only makes room for others of an equally to be detested species, who differ from their predecessors not by refraining from destroying the rights, and encreasing the burthens of the people, but only in the manner of doing it; and as their fore-runners have been for so many years exploring every part of the dead carcase of the constitution, and like insects bred in corruption, gorging upon what constituted the vital principle of its existence, their removal only occasions an in-

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roduction

roduction of a fresh swarm, the whole scope of
 whose industry will be employed to discover
 whether any part has happily been left unexplored;
 and whose endeavours will be used eagerly to
 finish the destruction of those parts which are yet
 left undestroyed.

Oh, England! Oh, my country! to what art thou
 reduced!—how art thou humbled!—thy leaders
 delight in thy misery, and those who *possess the*
rule over thee, hurry thee to destruction, and take
 pleasure in thy degradation! Thou butt of ri-
 dicule to Europe, and most despised of nations,
 where is thy departed spirit flown to?—alas! eva-
 porated—gone—it lies prostrate with Sydney—it
 perishes with Hampden!—their successors boast
 their names, but desert their principles; and the
 heroes of former ages stand but as marks, to shew
 how far their sons can depart from their examples,
 or apostatize from their practices. The name of
Briton once was synonymous with *freedom*, it now
 means *slave*, and the difference consists but in the
 sound of the words. To retrace the proceedings of the last parlia-
 ment, and to take a retrospective view of its most
 prominent features, is but to record the manner
 in which a once mighty state was brought to
 ruin; and to hold up, to the eternal execration of
 posterity, the men who basely sold themselves to a
 minister,

minister, and thereby became the instruments of his villainy, and the objects of their country's future vengeance. Their successors though they could not, as a parliament, join in the general chase, with the unremitting perseverance of blood-hounds, affrighted liberty round the nation, as did those whom they succeeded; yet will have the satisfaction of being in at the death, and enjoy with savage exultation the expiring groans of their country. Rejoice in the willingness with which the people bend their necks to receive the chains of their oppressors, and under the command of a dictator, who, though but nominally minister, has in effect a power that leaves far behind the tyranny of ancient despots; sit in the chair of legislation, despising the silent, yet settled resentment of the people on the one hand, or the just prerogative of the crown, and the person of the monarch on the other.

To state the outlines of a settled, a deliberate and an hitherto successful plan to do away every vestige of what this ill-fated country once thought liberty, shall be the object of the author of these remarks; to bring forward to the bar of their country's justice the men who executed it, is his lash—but to punish he leaves to others. Unacquainted with the sophism of separating men from measures, he boldly asserts guilt should be

pursued to its source, and on the head of its author should devolve all the consequences; but it is easier to point out the object of our resentment, than the means of his punishment. Supported as the minister is by the venal voice of corrupt majorities, perhaps he conceives the enormity of his crime is lessened by the number of his partizans; but should the country ever regain a spark of its former independence, when the people, calling loud for justice to pour the phial of wrath upon that devoted being, who mocks the misery of the people, and wraps himself up from the clamours of the nation in obstinate apathy: then, *then* shall he find that he himself shall be accountable for the destruction of his country, and that his accusers, possessed of a memory unlike his own, quick with recent miseries, and retentive of past injuries, shall demand the sacrifice of that head which has produced nothing but misery to the present age and ruin to posterity; shall demand as an inadequate, yet just expiation to the departed liberties of the country.

When future historians shall treat of the system which has been pursued by the ministers of George the Third, and view with a philosophic eye the consequences of their conduct, ending so widely distant from the point they attempted to accomplish; when they shall see the fetters of taxation, which

which were prepared for the brave Americans, broke with the single touch of all-conquering freedom, and after a lavish prodigality of British blood and treasure, Lord North obliged to acknowledge, with all the humiliating circumstances which attend a disappointed object, the independence of the United States. When, after satiating themselves with this prospect, they pass over a few years, and view another minister, endeavouring with all the means a powerful nation could furnish, both with respect to men and money, at the very hazard of its political existence, to contend with the energy of men fighting for liberty and every thing dear, and supplied with resources as mighty in extent as they are powerful in the discovery;—baffled at every point, and defeated at every attempt—though successful once on the ocean, yet the enemy even then gaining the object they contended for—when they behold the British flag retreating from the Netherlands, and the French one displayed victoriously over every part of it, flying triumphantly over all Lombardy, and, to the astonishment of the world, in the very heart of Italy!—when thus they view the features of this reign, they will conceive that either his majesty has been unfortunate in the choice of his ministers, or, that the one object recommended to be favoured by his advisers, was the extinction of the liberties of man in every quarter

ter of the globe; and the subjugation of every principle that does honor to the understanding to conceive, or the heart to delight in;—an over-watchful providence has counteracted the design, and the event has differed widely from the intention;—the rights, the privileges of man are spreading rapidly over the face of Europe, and civilized nations—superstition is on the decline;—tyranny is in part exterminated;—and man will ere long hail all the human race equally as his brethren! —

To come nearer home, to enter into some of the particulars of the follies, and display a few of the atrocities of this administration; to relate shameful apostacy; the political depravity of William Pitt, the *Sejanius* of England,* and perhaps to furnish

* For a comparison between the ancient and modern *Sejanius*, the reader is referred to Gordon's *Tacitus*, Vol. I. Book III. IV. *Sejanius* commands the Pretorian guards 21. His great credit with *Tiberius*, *ibid.* His arts to incense him against *Agrippina* and others 55. He marries his daughter to the son of *Claudius* 127. This resented by the people, *ibid.* His aspiring views 128. A statue erected to him by the senate 153. The partiality of *Tiberius* to him, *ibid.* His mighty sway with *Tiberius* 156. How ruinous to the state, *ibid.* His character and pursuits 156, 157. His designs against *Drusus*, he debauches his wife, *ibid.* Discharges his own 157, 158. At first recommends himself by good council 160. Studies to destroy the House of *Germanicus* 163. His wicked

matter for his impeachment; I shall go over some of his most conspicuous actions, which strike the eye at first glance, as of his own invention, because they are superlatively wicked, and of his creatures execution, because ignominiously defective; — Scourge of England stand forth; — thou comet of terror and dismay, whose malign influence sheds pestilence and want over the British atmosphere, descend! — Minister of misery, dispenser of destruction, come forward! and if *thy memory doth not again fail thee*, recollect thy past conduct, contemplate thy present actions, and dread thy coming punishment!

wicked artifices and instruments, *ibid.* He continually instigates Tiberius against Agrippina 166, 167. His excessive power and insatiation 180. He seeks Livia (the widow of Drusus) in marriage 181. Is alarmed and urges the emperor to leave Rome 183. His views in this, *ibid.* He exposes his person for Tiberius 195. Hence the increase of his power, *ibid.* He sets himself to destroy the offspring of Germanicus, *ibid.* No access to honour, but through his favours; this purchased only by iniquity 201. How he managed the prince's cruelty 203. His great power and insolence 206. His two children executed, and their bodies exposed 211. The girl first deflowered by the executioner *ibid.* His effects how disposed of 213. All those under accusation of any attachment to him are put to the slaughter 225. An affecting description of that massacre 225, 226.

Metinks

Methinks I see thee just rising above the political horizon, troubled with the vaporous shades of distracted counsels;—a faint gleam of light beaming from thy surface delighted many, and prognosticated future glory; but alas changed as thou gainedst the ascendancy, I see thy orb discoloured with blood, and emitting noxious blasts of death like potency; a complete self-moving system of corruption, of which *thou* art the center, I see thee surrounded by thy satellites, Dundas, Grenville, Windham and Apostacy, rising disdainful high o'er the earth, and moving oblique in all the horror of universal misery!—Man sickening at thy baleful power droops at thy approach,—spreading wide thy accursed influence o'er the desponding globe. Nature announces thy progress with shrieks of woe, and famine and death directing their shafts by thy hand, but restrained by a mightier, would lay the worthy in the dust, and ride triumphant over millions.

That the proceedings of parliament are to be considered but as the individual acts of the minister, will, I think, be hardly denied by any one who knows the influence he possesses over its members, and the means he uses to support it: with this view the complexion of their effects is communicated by the dispositions of the beings who primarily produce them, and fairly may it be concluded,

that,

that if these effects are of such a nature as to be productive of the most dreadful of miseries, the men who recommended or supported them must be the most depraved of wretches; I therefore shall consider the acts of the last parliament as the work of, and shall certainly while taking some few into consideration, attribute their consequences to the person who presides over the individuals, who compose the majorities in the House of Commons, who regularly marshals his troops, and appoints their different stations, who has turned the parliament into a meer assembly, to enact and register his decrees, and metamorphosed his sovereign into an automaton, whose sole business it is to sign them; —tho' a few of these beings who live upon the nod of a man, who was once considered but as a minister, may occasionally cause a few remarks upon their conduct, yet Mr. Pitt is the person who, as being the ringleader, is answerable for all their actions, he it is whom I contemplate as the focus in which all the rays of political iniquity converge as in a point; he it is whom England will ever consider as having created a new æra in its history, from which we shall date its slavery; and he it is whom if the thunders of popular fury shall ever burst, will be the object against whom it will be directed.

It has been the most fortunate circumstance which could attend the administration of this man,
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that the temper and disposition of the people has been so warped by having their thoughts continually turned towards taxation, as the only means of increasing the revenue of the country, that individuals, with the fallacious hope of diverting the minister's attention from such taxes as they conceived would most materially affect them, have continually in conversation dwelt upon the question, "which is the best article whereupon to lay a new tax?" instead of the much more important one, "are any more necessary?"—to divert their attention from considering the propriety of adding to the national burthens, to the apparently most easy methods of increasing them, has been his grand object, and was well worthy the attention of one, whose whole study is to wring from the hands of the people, their hard earned pittances, in order to lavish upon bankrupt emperors and swindling kings the produce of his extortion; whose future fame will be recorded as that of one unrivalled in superior infamy, and unequalled in abilities of no common class, but of such as are necessary to make the whole science of government consist in a system of finance; and who discovered the most expeditious methods of ruining a state, in a methodical arithmetical manner, by way of *double entry*.—

It was the display of Mr. Pitt's depth of knowledge in the most destructive modes of finance, that

was

was one great object which recommended him to the people's notice, when after having been torn with faction, and divided between parties, they first put the reins of the state machine into the youthful hands of this political phæton, whose progress has been marked with death, and whose career will be terminated but by a kingdom's destruction; the plausibility of his specious oratory, and his being the son of Chatham, to whom the nation had looked up to with reverence, made the people give him credit for a continuation of those powers which had distinguished his father's administration—blinded as they were with that prejudice, which, in Englishmen, is so strongly manifested for supposed hereditary abilities, they imagined it impossible that the son would deviate from that line of conduct his father had pursued; or that he could so far forget his own professions, when in 1780 he so boldly stood forward the champion of reform and the antagonist of ministerial corruption, as afterwards not only to apostatize from his own principles, but when possessed of the power, coolly and deliberately to endeavour to put those men to death, who had merely endeavoured to carry his theories into beneficial practice;—little thought they that the man, whose boast it was when he commenced his administration, that his whole study should be the reduction of the national debt, which at that time

(1783) amounted to £.266,710,214, would so far have accomplished his intention, according to the Irish mode of *proceeding backwards*, that in 1796 it would have encreased to £.410,944,685*, but, alas! the people doomed to be the dupes of impostors out of place, and to suffer the tyrannies of those very men when in, gave too credulous an ear to his professions, and Mr. Pitt began his ministerial race with all the exultation attendant upon extensive popularity;—the people, whose patience is as remarkable as that of the honest animal from whom they have been named, have waited for thirteen years in earnest expectation of having some of their grievancies redressed, and a few of their burthens taken from off their shoulders; or at least a promotion of trade, manufactures and commerce, by a continuance of peace, which might enable them to bear the load they groan under; instead of which they have seen taxes which were laid on but for a certain period, continued long after that period expired, and the object had ceased for which

* The operation of the sinking fund on this immense debt, as to its reduction, dwindles into a non-entity, when we find, that since 1785, but seventeen millions and a quarter of the 3 per cents. have been redeemed; that in consequence the debt has accumulated in three years to a sum which is seven times greater than the sum paid off in ten years, and that this reduction is to the whole stock, as one to twenty-four.

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they were voted*—and at length made permanent, by that most insulting of all arguments, viz. that as the people have borne them hitherto, they can still support them; nay they have had their very patience made use of as a reproach against them, and with an insolence which no one would use, but he, who secure in fancied strength, and setting at defiance the other branches of the legislature, has dared to assert in the House of Commons, that the people can bear the weight of more taxes, because they hitherto have borne those they are at present gulled with *without resistance*;—Secure in his majority whatever measures he brings forward, by means which far outstrip those of that father of corruption Sir R. Walpole, he not only adopts that minister's favourite method of feeling the pulses of the members, in order to adopt his price to his man; but has boldly raised the standard of apostacy, fixed it on the inviting base of ministerial corruption, and lavishing places, pensions, and sinecures, with all the prodigality of desperation, has put himself at the head of this gallant troop of deserters from all former principles;—Seceders from all parties; has opposed the voice of the nation, when loudly calling for a reform in the representative branch of its government, and the restoration of its ancient privileges;—has thrown upon the tables of the House,

* The Spanish and Russian armaments.

unregarded and despised, the petitions of more than two thirds of the people, who bravely stood forward to save, if possible, a falling state, by a timely attention to its defects, and renovation of its long lost virtues; and disregarding present admonition, heedless of future consequences, tho' so sensible of the tottering state of the constitution, as to draw his principal argument against its amendment from that very circumstance, because, if touched but with the finger of reform, the whole would fall to the ground; it now stands on the very precipice of anarchy on the one side, and military despotism on the other; attempted daily to be propped by those desperate coercive measures, which are always preludes to a nation's downfall; —To treat with contumelious indifference the scattered rays of a people's knowledge when combined in one, directing and throwing such a piercing light upon the absolute necessity of an immediate change in its representation, and disregard the almost unanimous voice of the nation, for the introduction of a system, than which, nothing else will save the country, are grand and noble actions, worthy of the man who produced them, and the minions of his power who support them; —but recollection where is thy blush! when sixteen years ago, at a meeting at Cambridge, where that great character James Day delivered an oration, wherein

expa-

expatiating on the only task left to the people, viz.
 "paying soldiers to enslave, and representatives to
 "betray," he boldly asserted, "it is an insult to
 "common sense, a mockery of our feelings, to say
 "that we are REPRESENTED; there is not a single
 "idea attached to the term, a single definition which
 "can be given of it, which is not grossly violated
 "in the election of an House of Commons; nor is
 "there a single argument which can be brought
 "to prove that House represents Great Britain, by
 "which it may not equally be proved, that it re-
 "presents France, Spain, the Indies, all Europe,
 "or the world itself!" That this very William
 Pitt, this "manager of the House," was appointed
 "one of the committee to restore the freedom of
 "parliament!"—nay that the nation resounded with
 his motions, and listened with joy to the speeches
 he made in defence of them! View him in 1793,
 when the floor of the House of Commons was literally
 covered with the names of the petitions for
 reform, when proof, "damning proof," was brought,
 that out of 2,250,000 males competent to vote,
 but 214,000 were entitled to that privilege, being
 less than a tenth part of the whole number; that out
 of this 11,075, even supposing them uninfluenced,
 return no less than 257 members, but that all inferior
 considerations are lost when contemplating the cor-
 ruption of patronage, that dry rot in the main tim-
 bers

bers of the state, which at the command of ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY FOUR individuals, returns THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY SEVEN members, being a decided majority of what is called The Commons of GREAT BRITAIN in parliament assembled, as legislatures, appointed by the nation at large, to make laws and impose taxes! View him, I say, not daring to deny these facts, but meanly shifting his ground by the stale pretence of the time being improper, and sheltering himself behind a slavish despicable majority!—the time was indeed improper to call upon the minister Pitt to perform, what the reforming Pitt had promised—'tis the man has changed his principles, but the system continues the same;—let the people no longer depend on individuals either in or out of power—the minister's apostacy from his principles was a new trait in the human character, and while he reared his unblushing front to renounce them, he stood as the goal which his followers ever after steadily kept in view, when endeavouring by eagerly treading in his footsteps, to arrive at the very extremity of political infamy.

But with as great a degree of success might those who thus recommended timely reform, in preference to sudden revolution, have bade a dead body to reanimate its own lifeless organ, and again perform the functions of their office, as call upon this House to purify itself!—Who could expect they would

VOTE

vote themselves to be usurpers?—It was however of service to convince the nation that they were so, and accordingly their own journals bear testimony to inform a future age of this melancholy truth, who will therein read, with a mixture of wonder and indignation, that “the House of Commons *“ does not represent the people of England;”* that “seats in that *honourable* House are as notoriously “sold, as the standings for cattle at a fair;”—and that one member* honestly declared, when exultingly he broke from the shackles of ministerial influence, and proclaimed his mind had regained its former freedom, that “he had hitherto carried his “soul to that House, as a country girl would her “eggs and butter to market, to dispose of to the “highest bidder!”

At this moment, however, we feel the effects of the proceedings of our late parliament;—parliament do I call it! of this majority at the nod of ministry, and under the influence of the *hundred and fifty-four* patrons, who force these men on the nation, to perform the part of representatives, many of whom obtain seats merely to preserve their persons from arrest, and enjoy the ministerial secret service money—these compose the glorious majority of whom Mr. Pitt is the leader; and therefore while such men possess the power to legislate for the king-

* Mr. Hallid.

dom at large, most heartily do I agree with my Lord of Rochester, that "*the people have nothing to do with the laws, [but to obey them]*" they are certainly as completely excluded that right, as the enslaved nation from whom the Grand Mufti drew his precedent.

As tenants who have but a life interest in the estate, they have been regardless of the situation in which they left it; and to their successors nothing but destruction and ruin present themselves. They were the creatures of a man careless of his country's welfare, and of course death and misery are stamped upon all their proceedings;—At a time when the nation suffered to the quick, the effects of the American war, which had added upwards of one hundred millions to our debt, and six millions to our annual taxes; when the civil list amounted to £.1,200,000; and the pension list to upwards of £.160,000 per annum; besides other burthens too numerous to particularize, yet too weighty to bear the increase of. In the midst of all these calamities, under the pressure of these grievances, was the nation plunged into a war, the avowed purpose of which was, the prevention of the free navigation of the Scheldt, which even the literary champion of ministerial madness* compared to a war about a chamber pot; but whereof the secret design was

* Mr. Bosc.

either the restoration of the old diabolical despotism of France, with all the former horrors of a baillif, a chatelet, the gabelle, the capitation, galleys, racks, wheels and torture! or if we consider the authenticity of treaties * never yet denied, the division of the country among the combined powers at war against it.

Norwithstanding the opposition to this desperate act, which was made in the House of Commons, and the sense entertained of its consequences by the people at large;—the majority, who are “*put in*” by the 154 individuals, thought otherwise, and at the command of the minister, let loose the dogs of war upon the earth, and destruction with hasty strides soon followed;—surely nothing could prove the necessity of a reform stronger than this—the Commons of England, who nominally, at least, are considered as the representatives of the people, acted *contrary* to the general sense of the nation, and *conformably* to the advice of a single individual, who had the charms of bribery at his disposal to cover the alarms occasioned by an unquiet conscience!—What followed? A general panic; an universal paralysis pervaded the country;—the sudden stagnation given to trade and commerce, and the reduction of flourishing manufactures to instant ruin, introduced such a gigantic insolvency, such an

* Of Pilnitz and Pavia.

extensive wide spreading bankruptcy, that the English history has not its parallel;—130 docquets were struck in one week, and in the course of the year no less than 3,000!—Nothing could equal the astonishment this created, except the assertion of Mr. Dundas, “that these failures were the strongest “proofs of the flourishing state of the kingdom!”

Mean time the war proceeded—but it was necessary in some measure to reconcile the country to it;—for this purpose an alarm was set on foot by his majesty’s ministers, that there was an insurrection in the kingdom;—Plots were forged,—because real ones could not be discovered—the militia were embodied—the Duke of Richmond took the command of the Tower, and the people were daily gratified with the sight of his curious chevaux de frize of tubs of dust, arranged in a most tremendous form—the Habeas Corpus act, that guardian of British liberty, was suspended;—and individuals were arrested—their papers seized, and their persons thrust into dungeons;—there appeared a dark and deep design to exterminate the very name of freedom from the island—the House of Commons, instead of being a controul upon the two branches of the legislature *for* the people, was converted into an engine of oppression *on* the people; and the government seemed to be composed but of monarchy and aristocracy—the secret com-

committee, appointed to examine into the treason said to be existing in the kingdom, was notoriously composed of the minister, and his avowed supporters; and the principal officers of the law appointed by the crown to superintend public prosecutions, were materially concerned in the framing of laws, which they might afterwards be bound in their official capacities, to enforce the execution of* ;—'twas necessary to intimidate the nation into a silence about the measures of administration, or the ministry knew they would not have been permitted to proceed in their career of madness.—Plots, treasonable discoveries, insurrections, and alarms, were now pretended to cover the face of the country, and the mind was agitated with conspiracies that never existed; or that the minister's friends (i. e. spies) were the promoters of the expression used by Lord Justice Clerk, of Scotland, "that it was necessary "the people should use a little blood," plainly developed the dark, the real conspiracy, which had been agreed on among *certain men*, against the freedom of their country.—Some illustrious beings fell sacrifices to the tyranny of Scotch criminal law;—men born to illuminate the earth by the radiance of their intellectual light;—to guide the political vessel, crazy as it was, between the rocks of anarchy and despotism, to the haven of liberty,

* Vide Blackstone's Commentaries. Vol. I. Chap II.

were

were the devoted victims of ministerial revenge. — Ye virtuous, brave and enlightened patriots, *Muir, Palmer, Gerrald*, and all who banished this spot of earth, are equal in principle, and united in misfortune. Oh! while the name of freedom is remembered, your glorious endeavours to restore its *reality* shall not be forgotten by your grateful country! Suffering worthies! the time may arrive, when Britons, hailing ye to your native isle, shall, in shouts of joy, welcome ye back to the shores of British *freedom*!

It must be confessed, that the ministry having so much business at this moment on their hands, could not be expected to be successful in all, tho' we must do them the credit to say, they certainly endeavoured, by every means a fertile imagination could devise, to carry all their intentions into effect, and every attempt into practice; but when we reflect, that, engaged as they were in a cause, which had for its object the extermination of freedom in another country, at the same time they were concerned in endeavouring the destruction of liberty in their own, it is scarcely a matter of wonder, that failure in one object, was the inevitable consequence of success in the other. — The event of the state trials for a time struck a panic into the hearts of ministry, yet they have since recovered their tone, and have lately shewn themselves as capable as ever, of the mighty

mighty task of binding nine millions of people in the fetters of ministerial despotism.—It is to that most inestimable of all privileges, "*trial by jury*," that we are indebted for the verdicts, which will make the names of the men who returned them, stand high on the lists of eternal fame, and call forth the unbounded gratitude of succeeding ages.—With universal joy was it seen, that a non-descript crime, called constructive treason, which took up nine hours to explain the meaning, and nine days to prove the existence of, reverberated with treble force on its authors, and that innocence triumphed over ministerial iniquity.—The interest the public took in these trials, shew the detestation in which they held the attempt to destroy men, for merely doing in 1794, what the minister, the Duke of Richmond, and others of reforming notoriety, had so strongly recommended to the people at large in 1780 and 1782.—The impression which the being obliged to appear at the Old Bailey made upon the minister, was similar to what is felt by other criminals who appear there;—it deprived him of one of his faculties; and the only thing he could remember, was—to forget that he had ever belonged to a convention, for the express purpose of procuring a parliamentary reform; or that he and Mr. Tooke were members of it at the same time, and had the same object in view!

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But the acquittal of the state prisoners was the triumph of the people over ministerial tyranny, and thus defeated as they were in their grand attempt, the war became the principal object of their present, and the annihilation of Magna Charta, and the Bill of Rights, of their future attention.—The war proceeded in all its horrors;—town after town fell into the hands of the victorious French;—the Bishop of Osnaburgh headed the British troops, sent forth to fight this holy war, in defence of our religion;—the scheme of our attack upon Dunkirk, said to be planned by a great law character, who one would conclude had never heard the words “according to equity and good conscience,” was to the highest degree disastrous; and was attributed, certainly with a great portion of justice, to the inattention of that gallant officer* who had so nobly fortified the *tower*, but unfortunately had neglected to send the necessary ammunition, and gun boats, proper for the attempt upon Dunkirk.—Let the curtain of obscurity cover the disgraceful transaction, unless it be raised at a future period, to produce charges against the individuals concerned.—The brave soldiers, who were forced from England to moisten the plains of Germany with their blood, after this made faint resistance; retreating from one post to another, they served but to augment

* The Master General of the Ordinance.

the zeal of their enemies to pursue and destroy them; and while our metaphysical Secretary at War was entertaining the House of Commons with his syllogisms, and logically proving that a positive defeat was negatively successful, the troops of England were flying before the superior arms of the triumphant Republicans. What was predicted at the commencement of the war, was verified at this period, and the states of Holland received the conquerors with open arms. With such accumulation of successes, and their desperate battles crowned with such astonishing victory, as to make the most mighty acts of ancient heroism nothing in their comparison;—the principal fortified towns in the Netherlands capitulated to the victors;—and the progress of the Republican armies struck terror into the heart of Francis the Second, at Vienna.—The British minister now discovered his error, and after some vain attempts to excite a civil war in the country, which served but to hurry the unhappy objects of his delusion to that death he alone merited, he recalled the troops, and left the enemy possessed of an extent of territory tremendous to consider, and which for ever deprives England of the power necessary to support her former character of arbitress of Europe. The campaign of 1794 was the most fatal one to the allies ever known.—The French undismayed by danger, gathering additional courage

from the greater number of obstacles, their valour increasing with their difficulties, and despising death, accomplished actions, which had they not happened at the period in which we live, the description of would be accounted the effusions of romance. According to a statement made in the House of Lords, by a nobleman of an enlarged understanding, and liberal mind*, whose efforts to bring the ministry to a sense of their folly were continually unsuccessful, the French this campaign performed the following deeds, for the accuracy of which he pledged his honor to the House:

Twenty-three sieges successfully conducted.

Six pitched battles decisively won.

Two thousand eight hundred and three pieces of cannon taken.

Sixty thousand of the best troops of Europe compelled to surrender prisoners of war, either by capitulation, or in the field.

One hundred and fifty-four towns and cities captured; among them many of the strongest fortresses in Europe.

The authenticity of this statement, he said, would be vindicated by the most scrupulous examination of facts, and the names of the places taken might be

* Marquis of Lansdown.

ascertained, by reference to the maps which exhibit the different theatres of the war.

The inertness of the measures of ministry was equalled but by their folly. At a time when England had what she calls three grand fleets, either attacking the barren rocks of Corsica, or kept in harbour to gratify the curiosity of royal idleness, the French, by splitting their naval force into small parts, and covering the ocean with their cruisers, so distressed our trade, and impoverished our commerce, that life-blood of the state, that insurance rose as high as 50 per cent. and repeated representations of the merchants to the Admiralty Board, at last awakened the sense of the minister to some degree of shame, and made him remove his brother, the supine Chatham, from the head of it. If any thing was wanting to prove the small share of interest the late parliament took in the people's welfare, by protecting trade, the support of all, the very patriotic declaration made by the *respectable representative of three individuals** would surely do it, who, when the necessity of peace was strongly urged, by the distresses the nation already suffered, in consequence of this diabolical war, exclaimed, "perish our commerce, let our constitution live!" and which agreed with the determination of the

* Mr. George Hardinge, member for Old Sarum.

E 2 minister,

minister, who protested in the House of Commons, that as long as there was a man left to fight, or a guinea to spend, the war should be continued!

In reviewing the actions of this parliament, and the support it gave to the ministry, is it possible to pass over the fatal Quiberon expedition, or the disasters never to be forgotten, which the West India fleet suffered in consequence: delayed beyond the period when it should have sailed, merely to furnish troops for the Coast of Brittany, where they were either miserably slaughtered, or obliged to reembark as speedily as an ignominious retreat would permit. The brave Sombreuil, deceived by the ministry, and sent on a forlorn hope, met death with a fortitude which only innocence could inspire, and left a mourning beauty to deplore his loss, in strains dictated by the wildness of disordered intellects. The effects of this delay in the sailing of the fleet, was not merely productive of those uncommon disasters which it experienced at the time—disasters the accounts of which were daily arriving, and shocked the hearers; but at this moment the West Indies, by having been deprived of an early support, is in the most critical of all situations, and the brave handful of men, who from their numbers are too small to achieve any exploit worth the attempt, are daily perishing with disease, occasioned by the climate; or destroyed by the enemy, superior in force.

force. Enquiries into the causes of these disgraceful proceedings were made in the House, and answered in the usual way, by the ministry ordering their majority to stand forward, and "*vote them INNOCENT.*"

In proportion as the war increased, the distresses of the poor did likewise. Notwithstanding the contempt so lavishly poured by courtiers, on what are insolently called "*the common people,*" their situation is the barometer of the state, and wherever that is deplorable, their rulers are exactly in the same proportion, unfit to govern them. The scratch they have received by this war, will not be healed by all the *Court Plaster* Mr. Wyndham, that quack among the state physicians, can furnish. It could not be wondered at, that as their calamities increased, their complaints would likewise. The leisure which the minister enjoyed in 1795, from the fatigues attendant upon the continuance of offensive war on the Continent, gave him an opportunity to consider of, and provide a remedy for the growing evil of popular murmurs. The event of his attempt to destroy French liberty ending so contrary to his expectations, made him turn his thoughts to a similar object at home, and resolved to make his name live for ever in the blackest pages of futurity—by the destruction of the temple of British freedom, he has been successful beyond
his

his most sanguine wishes. To proceed in a regular systematic manner, and at once to cut off all hopes of the people's resistance to his tyrannic measures, the country saw barracks erected in every part of it, and a standing army of a new description, as unconstitutional in principle, as dangerous in practice, established in the kingdom. The fencible corps have completely altered the form of government under which our ancestors lived, and we now exist entirely under the controul of a military power unknown to our forefathers. The illegality of quartering soldiers in barracks, and thereby cutting off their connection with the people, cannot be stronger expressed than in the words of that luminary of British jurisprudence — Blackstone, who says, (Commentaries, B. 1. C. 13), "To prevent the executive power
 " from being able to oppress, it is requisite that
 " the armies with which it is intrusted, should consist
 " of the people, *and have the same spirit with the*
 " *people*, as was the case at Rome, till Marius new
 " modelled the legions, by enlisting the rabble of
 " Italy, and laid the foundation of all the military
 " tyranny that ensued*. Nothing then, accord-
 " ing to these principles, ought to be more guarded

* Montesquieu, Sp. L. 11, 6.

" against in a free state, than making a military
 " power, when such an one is necessary to be kept
 " on foot, a body too distinct from the people,
 " like ours*; therefore, it should wholly be com-
 " posed of natural subjects, it ought only to be
 " enlisted for a short and limited time, the
 " soldiers also should live intermixed with the
 " people; no *separate camp*, no *barracks*, no *inland*
 " *fortresses* should be allowed; and perhaps it
 " might be better, if by dismissing a stated num-
 " ber, and enlisting others at every renewal of
 " their term, a communication could be kept up
 " between the *army* and the *people*, and the *citizen*
 " and the *soldier* be more intimately connected
 " together."

The ministry have, in their defence of this ar-
 bitrary measure, boldly avowed that it was for the
 very purpose of separating the soldiers from the
 people, and thereby preventing their minds from
 being debauched, to create a distinct interest be-
 tween them that it was adopted. For the purpose
 of erecting these military nunneries (as they have
 been very properly termed) to preserve the morals
 and chastity of soldiers, no less a sum than two
 millions of money† has been already expended in

* i. e. as it was at the time he wrote these Commentaries.

† Vide General Smith's motion on the erection of bar-
racks.

building barracks ; and more of course will be laid out, before these are compleated*.

The emigrations which have taken place, in consequence of the vindictive measures pursued by administration, has been alarming in the highest degree: the system of persecution adopted by ministry, on the informations of low, pitiful, and *perjured* spies, has been a disgrace to the British character; and united with the foregoing provocations, have driven out of the kingdom men of property, and of the first-rate abilities, who left this sinking island for happier shores of grateful liberty. Masters have been convicted on the evidence of the very servants who waited at their tables; and men have been notoriously hired to form friendships, on purpose to betray! It has been the common exclamation of those who abet the measures of this destructive system — “those who don’t like the country, let them leave it!”

* Lord Gage, in the year 1739, when delivering his opinion on this subject, declared, that he considered the quartering of soldiers in barracks, as above all other attempts the most fatal, and that it would give the finishing stroke to liberty. “If this,” continued his lordship “should be attempted, [*alas ’tis accomplished*] it would become the duty of the people to draw their swords as their last effort for liberty; and never to sheath them, till they have brought the authors and contrivers of the measure to condign punishment.”

Alas,

gniblu

Alas! who would stay that could go?—But *are* the people to be the sufferers, because a set of drivellers must not be interrupted in their endeavours to plunge the country into ruin?—O, shallow politicians! who consider not that the strength of a state consists in the number of its inhabitants, hear what the deep-thinking and eloquent Johnson says on the subject, and for ever after be dumb, rather than give such pernicious advice!

“ To hinder insurrection by driving away the
 “ people, and to govern peaceably by having no
 “ subjects, is an expedient that argues no great
 “ profundity of politics. To soften the obdurate,
 “ to convince the mistaken, to mollify the resent-
 “ ful, are worthy of a statesman; but it affords a
 “ legislator little self-applause to consider, that
 “ where there was formerly an insurrection, there
 “ is now a wilderness*.

The numerous popular meetings, which were held in the neighbourhood of London, to consider of petitions to the different branches of the legislature, disappointed the expectations of Mr. Pitt, who imagined that by their committing some act of riot, he should easily find a pretext to destroy them: but, it was the regularity with which they were conducted, and the settled, yet quiet, determination with which the conductors seemed to

* Tour to the Hebrides.

pursue their object, which indeed alarmed him; and now it was that he determined with one blow to crush the remaining liberties of his country; and by making the parliament, who had supported him in all his measures, carry him through with the last, shew to all the world their devotion to his interest, and the readiness with which, as the last service they could perform him, raised him to the supreme dictatorship of Great Britain.

Would the men who employed the miserable Watt as a spy upon others, as a secret promoter of their schemes, only to betray them; — who had notoriously been in ministerial pay for that purpose, and was put to death, only because he had not been regular in his communications; — would the men, I say, who had the wickedness to employ, and afterwards the treachery to betray this spy, hesitate in engaging others to mix in a crowd, and while the people surrounded the chief magistrate, and in language prompted by distress give a universal cry for "*bread and peace*," insult his person while in the discharge of his official duty, and thereby give a plausibility to the succeeding actions of ministry, and thus throw odium on the party, who watched them with the eyes of jealousy? It is a notorious fact, that these wretches were seen active among the crowd, and stimulating the outrageous; and though it was deemed necessary that one solitary

litary victim should suffer, to give a colour to the deed, and receive a sentence which Jefferies himself would have blushed to pronounce, it is well known who were at the bottom of the transaction, and that it was invented for the purpose of giving an opportunity for the introduction of bills that abolish freedom, and legalize British slavery.

The minister saw that his measures were so detestable all would execrate them, and to prevent the consequences of this, he has prohibited their discussion,—the relief of complaining, while under the most refined torture, was always hitherto allowed; but now, while the people are writhing under the agonies of ministerial tyranny, that privilege is taken from them, and they must not only *suffer*, but be *silent*, while they do so. What will future historians think of the administration of the present reign, when such bills were thought necessary *nominally* to preserve the person of his majesty, but *really* to make the ministry independent both of the sovereign and the people? Magna Charta is now indeed become “a piece of old parchment with seals dangling to it:” the right of complaining of grievances, which by that instrument is allowed to the people in its fullest extent*,

* This charter was given at the meadow called Running-Mead, betwixt Windsor and Staines, the fifteenth day of June, in the seventeenth year of our reign.

is by this detestable bill, which prohibits freedom of speech, or any communication which a wicked minister may construe to be an uttering or declaring of "*words or sentences*" tending to incite, or stir up the people, to an hatred or contempt of his "*government,*" or administration, compleatly annihilated; and the great charter of England is repealed by authority of parliament, or more pro-

John, by the grace of God, king of England, to the sheriff of Hampshire, and to the twelve that are chosen in that county, to enquire of, and put away, the evil customs of the sheriffs, and of their ministers, of forests and foresters, of warrens and warreners, of rivers, and of guarding them, greeting. We command you, that without delay, you seize into our hand, the lands and tenements, and the goods of all those of the county of Southampton, that will not swear to the said five and twenty barons, according to the form expressed in our charter of liberties, or to such as they shall have thereunto appointed; and if they will not swear presently, at the end of fifteen days after, their lands and tenements, and chattels are seized into our hands, that ye sell all their goods, and keep safely the money that ye shall receive for the same, to be employed for the relief of the holy land of Jerusalem; and that ye keep their lands and tenements in our hands till they have sworn, or that Stephen, archbishop of Canterbury, and the barons of our Kingdom have given judgment thereupon. In witness whereof, we direct unto you these our letters patent. Witness ourself at Odiham, the seven and twentieth day of June, in the seven-teenth year of our reign,

perly,

perly, the *anchosen* representatives of the country. The dominion over the bodies of Englishmen is not enough for the oligarchy of 154, but they must extend it also over the mind, and in proportion as their government becomes more oppressive, the less "hatred and contempt" must we feel towards it ! The nation is in such an high political fever, that the very mention of its disease is prohibited, because of its tendency to inflame it; and our rulers begin to discover that the present, which is called the *established* government of the country, cannot be mentioned but with sentiments of "hatred and contempt," and therefore forbid our speaking a single word about it. The life of the sovereign is continually brought forward by the minister, as an object of discussion; and under pretence of its preservation, has he secured his own unbounded power:—never before was the length of the monarch's life considered as an obstacle to the people's freedom, till the minister conceived it better secured by an act of parliament, than his subjects' affection. By the bill prohibiting popular meetings to consider of petitions against, what is called by Mr. Pitt, "*supposed*" grievances, the bill of rights is abrogated in its most essential point, and one of the despotic acts for which the Stuarts lost the crown, viz. the denial of the right of subjects to petition the king, and commitments for so doing,
is

is now made part of the statute law of the realm. The statute of Edward III. which since the year 1352, has been considered as fully adequate to the purpose of protecting the sovereign's life, is towards the latter end of the eighteenth century discovered to be insufficient for that purpose. And it is found necessary to "exert a vigour beyond the law," that Englishmen may never more hear of such novelties as "acquitted felons," or be told that "a jury's verdict does not clear from guilt." Was it the representatives of England that witnessed these words?—was it the parliament of the country they were spoken to?—It was;—and it was to the same men who have plunged the nation into a calamitous war—it was to the same men who pronounced they had discovered treason, but which an honest jury declared did not exist—and the same men, who, if all their political acts during this parliament were of ten times more fatal consequences than at present, have, by the introduction of these bills, exceeded their former criminality an hundred fold, and gloriously monopolized the execrations of the present age and the curses of posterity!

The constitution of England has been the theme upon which panegyric is exhausted; and its admirers, while delineating it on paper, have been more lavish of their praises, than careful to examine

amine whether it deserved them. It is said to unite the advantages of the three forms of government which exist in the world ; and that these three powers, by being *nicely* balanced, act as counterpoises upon each other, and thus preserving their several virtues in exact force, keep the state in equilibrio. Admitting that this deserves all the admiration which has been bestowed on it—*if it is so* ;—the greatest enthusiast in its favour must acknowledge, that *that* praise will be diminished, exactly in the same proportion as we find *it is not*. That “the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished,” has long ago been entered on the books of that house, supposed to represent the democratic part of the country ; and that this influence has now risen to such an enormous magnitude, as to enable the other branches of the state to set up an interest distinct from that of the people, is too notorious to be contradicted :—the third estate is in effect completely annihilated, and has no check whatever upon the other two. The very circumstance of the introduction of the late bills confirms the idea, that the crown has obtained a preponderance as great, as its consequences are alarming. The petitions from all parts of the kingdom, prove the sense of the people against the measures ; and the support given to them by the *minister's* majority, as clearly
 prove

prove that the House of Commons speaks not the sense of the country, and therefore are but nominal representatives. Though the fact of the government hastily degenerating into simple monarchy, has been long past too evident, yet it was not till lately that the doctrine of its propriety was publicly asserted by a ministerial hireling, and defended by a secretary of state.—The lopping off the "*branches*" of parliament, from the "*tree*" of monarchy, and thereby rendering the latter more "*vigorous*," has been boldly recommended; and Mr. Reeves himself, who did so, has nobly set the example, and flourished his Tomahawk for that purpose! However, his zeal is superfluous, for the sap which has pervaded every leaf, and insinuated itself into every twig, is of *such a nature* as to make all its parts bend to any form, and has rendered the most stubborn bough compleatly flexible.

That these observations are applicable in the strongest sense to the last parliament, let their recorded actions tell, that they may be equally applied to the present; who that knows almost the same men are returned, and nearly the same measures will be pursued will deny?—The minister has increased his power by the dissolution, and rendered himself invulnerable—the king's business, as it is called, will most certainly be dispatched with that speed it demands, for scarce any but his own servants

wants are concerned in its management; — the people's will be deserted of course, for they have no servants. The majority in the House of Commons, who support the minister, and conduct the business of the state, are chosen by him, and he has acquainted us with the share of abilities necessary for the situation, in forcing poor Sir Alan Gardiner upon the hustings, by way of specimen! the continued anxiety of the gallant admiral about the "state of the poll" shewed his conscious knowledge of its deficiency to represent the polished city of Westminster; however, his endeavours to do more than his duty, being a sort of political supererogation, certainly demands the thanks of his country; and no doubt the minister will liberally reward him for his *amphibious* services*.

It has been long used as an argument for the continuation of the present state of representation, that though the country is not *actually* represented, it is *virtually* so, and that the present representation is adequate to all the purposes for which an House of commons is necessary. If the fact is so, the present new parliament will act as the people

* It was observed by a friend of the author, whose shrewdness of remark has often been the admiration of his hearers, that "had the event of Mr. Tooke's election been successful, the country would have had one representative whose object should be not so much to *op-pose* as to *ex-pose* the minister."

would had they the power, and the truth of this assertion will be proved by their proceedings. As the actions of last parliament were diametrically opposite to the sense of the nation, the present must, if it professes to speak the sense of the people, compleatly do away their effects, and prove their sincerity to restore the liberties of their country, by bringing to the bar of justice the men who have been principally concerned in enslaving it; they must therefore immediately

IMPEACH THE MINISTER!

The miseries of the country call aloud for vengeance on the author of its calamities, and demands this sacrifice, to deter others from rising to unbounded power on the ruins of the state;—the tenth part of his crimes is sufficient to convict him, and let the consequences attendant on the residue be impartially divided among those who principally supported his measures! — Since the commencement of his administration, events of such daring malignancy have succeeded to each other so rapidly, as to make the whole appear one continued scene of the most unprincipled profligacy, and an accumulation of all the blackest deeds of his predecessors: commencing his career with apostacy, he has concluded it with a nation's ruin—he has scorned the petty traffic of individual distress, and boldly proved himself an wholesale dealer in destruction. When he first forced himself into the

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the direction of affairs, our taxes amounted to £12,995,519—they have already accumulated to near twenty millions, and if a peace was to be proclaimed instantly, it is said they must be increased £2,549,335!—he has increased the national debt near 100 millions in three years, and 150 millions in the course of his administration!—he has notoriously influenced the return of members to parliament, and his guilt has been proved before the Lord Chief Justice of England!—he has wilfully plunged his country into a war, which has destroyed her commerce and trade, and the consequences of which will be felt ages hence!—he has by employing notorious spies, and wretches who live by informing, endeavoured to murder innocent men, and punished others for following his own example!—he has, by extending the excise laws, endeavoured to abolish the trial by jury!—he has, by the exportation of such a quantity of specie for the continuance of bloodshed, as to be unexampled in commercial history, so shook the confidence which monied men had hitherto placed in public securities, that: “as safe as the bank” is no longer a proverb!—he has, by a miserable manœuvre, evaded an enquiry into the state of the poor, though their distresses call aloud for redress!—he has organized and increased a standing army, and to put the people under military controul, has erected barracks for 40,000 men as a peace establishment.

establishment!—and lastly, he has, by the introduction of bills that deprive the people of their right of complaining of these grievances, and prohibits their meeting to petition against them, rivetted the chains of our fetters, and compleatly destroyed the liberties of his country!

I have not detailed half the crimes of which Mr. Pitt is guilty:—if the present House of Commons considers itself as the organ of the people, let it immediately begin the impeachment of the minister, and the abolition of national grievances; and let the present parliament as much as it can, do away the actions of the last; for this purpose it must without delay

REPEAL THE TWO BILLS!

that at present disgrace the statute book, and have been passed into laws by ministerial treachery, and decidedly against the sense of the people. Let this be followed with

AN IMMEDIATE PEACE!

The effects of the war may be seen by the misery of the country—the stagnation of trade—the ruin of manufactures—the intolerable price of the very necessities of life—an accumulating debt and increasing taxation, demand an instant attention. A few of the consequences of it, as it affects our foreign connections are, that we saw Prussia, while taking our gold with one hand, signing a treaty of peace with the other!—Spain terrified into sub-
mission!

mission!—Sardinia accepting any terms which might be offered by her conquerors!—the Pope obliged to fly from Rome—and the French armies triumphantly extending their conquests over all Italy!—Germany defeated in every quarter—and the Austrian eagle flying precipitately from its pursuers!—the Stadtholder, on whose behalf Mr. Pitt entered into the war, obliged to abdicate his dominions, without the most distant hope of restoration, and gladly taking refuge in England from the fury of his subjects*. These events one would imagine sufficient to appal the stoutest advocate for a continuance of the war.—To prevent in future these acts of desperation, and to make the minister, instead of being the mere creature of the crown, dependent on, and a servant of the people; to make the distresses of the country the first object of consideration to the House of Commons; and instead of voting away unaccounted millions, to direct the whole of its attention to the ruined state of our finances, and the reduction of the present enormous weight of taxes under which we groan; to bring events to pass, than which nothing else will save the state, the present parliament must

* If Louis the 18th should (as it is said he will) take up his residence in England, we shall then see another of the novelties produced by this war, viz. two *kings of France* in this country; and, like Mr. Bayes's two *kings of Brentford*, both possessed of an equal right to the title. I

either

either do all the forementioned acts, or acknowledge it does *not* represent the people of England!—It must, if it *virtually* speaks the sense of the democracy of the country, acknowledge itself to be exercising a power it is not intitled to, and legislating for men over whom it has no *legal* controul! it must, therefore, most assiduously promote by all its own endeavours

A COMPLETE REFORM IN THE REPRESENTATION!

the necessity of which has been so often insisted on, and so ably pointed out, that inspiration itself cannot illustrate it. No longer let 154 *patrons* send a majority of members to the House, who afterwards call themselves the *Commons of Great Britain*, and exercise powers which the people should only entrust to their own representatives. To prevent the influence of bribery on electors, let there be an

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE!

and to prevent their being influenced by ministerial corruption when returned, let there be

ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS!

These are some of the important acts which must be accomplished by the present parliament, if it professes *virtually* to represent the people, for they are the sense of the majority of the nation, and stand upon the solid base of

EQUALITY OF RIGHTS.

The submission to laws which are made without our concurrence is *slavery*; that the people at large protested

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rested against the Treason and Sedition Bills, yet
that they were made laws decidedly against their
consent, is a fact; and the inference to be drawn is
too obvious to be mistaken! The present calm
which the minister may conceive to arise from an
acquiescence in the necessity of his measures, is the
forerunner of, and prognosticates a future STORM
which his own sacrifice will scarcely allay! The
numerous insults—the continued miseries—the
establishment of a system of terror—the destruction
of confidence between man and man—the arbitrary
punishments of individuals—all, all the acts of this
administration are remembered! There is a point
beyond which human forbearance becomes cri-
minal—we are hastening to that—let the minister
be cautious, for if the people speak, they will speak
in THUNDER.

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